

Remarks

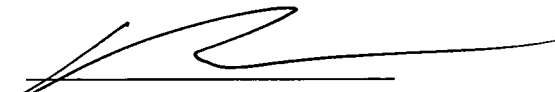
Claims 1-23 are pending in the application. By this Response, claims 1-19 are provisionally elected for examination, with traverse. Prompt examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

With regard to the Restriction Requirement, Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of all claims 1-23 is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one of the claims would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803, in which it is stated that “[i]f the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions” (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply to the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.



In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement between Groups I and II. Should the Examiner require anything further from Applicants, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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